

Living history ...

Junger’s WWII war lesson teaches young Americans

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STAFF WRITER

“Marines have written one of their most brilliant chapters. They have delivered the goods when and where needed in every theater of operations and across every ocean in the biggest, the most difficult and dangerous job ever undertaken.”
- President Franklin D. Roosevelt, describing the Marine Corps’ impact on World War II

Major Eric R. Junger, Depot operations officer, is one of thousands of Americans who spend countless hours educating his fellow citizens about the sacrifices and hardships that American military men and their families endured during World War II.

Junger, who began his college career as a History major, is a member of the Military Vehicle Association, a prospective member of the Marine Historical Company, and a teacher of World War II-era history to all who will listen. He also drives his 1942 Ford JPW jeep in local parades and brings it to historical Depot events. The jeep will also be at the Depot’s upcoming Christmas concert.

He is unquestionably a World War II junkie, but his desire to educate others about the war arose only after a frightening discovery.

“There is a younger generation who has no idea what those [World War II veterans] went through,” said Junger, who discovered this fact while giving his Marines



Neil Holmes

WWII re-enactments are becoming more and more popular. Re-enactors even supply armoured vehicles, like this Stuart tank. Major Eric R. Junger, the Depot’s operations officer, is planning to take his love of military history a step further this summer by participating in Marine Historical Company’s reenactment of a World War II-era battle.

a military history class. “I want to educate everyone I can.”

Junger was convinced that something had to be done. He began giving his Marines regular classes on everything from the battles of World War II to the gear that the Marines were issued.

As much as Junger enjoyed the educational experience, something was missing from his life. He found it in Hawaii.

While he was stationed there, many military-based movies were being filmed, and there were also many military parades

and reenactments.

He was hooked, but was unable to participate because of his occupational requirements. All that would change once he was sent back stateside. Junger and other military members performed a “Living History,” for local children.

“I had such a great time doing it that I took the big plunge, and bought all my own uniforms and a 1942 Ford JPW,” said Junger, who admitted that as much as he loves educating children, his most cherished memories involve

the veterans themselves.

“The most gratifying thing is to be approached by a World War II-era veteran with tears in his eyes and have him say, ‘I remember,’” said Junger.

He is planning to take his love of military history a step further this summer by participating Marine Historical Company’s reenactment of a World War II-era battle. During the reenactment, he hopes to continue his mission of “inspiring and educating youth.” He did not say whether he plans to drive his World War II



Photo courtesy of the USMC Historical Company

Junger hopes to educate as many young people as possible about the sacrifices and hardships captured in this photo taken on the beaches of Iwo Jima, Japan, in 1945.

jeep to the event, which would surely draw looks of astonishment from travelers.

“I get a lot of high-fives, smiles and waves,” said Junger, who occasionally drives his jeep to work. “Even some dirty looks because it does not move as fast as the rest of the cars.”

Many of the World War II veterans whom Junger cares so much about do not move as fast as they used to, but the speed at which you travel is not important to a history buff – how you get there is much more important.

SHOOT,

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time, in an attempt to exercise their newly-honed marksmanship skills.

If they fail to qualify the second time around, they have three additional days in MTP to qualify.

So far, the new program has proven successful, with a 94 percent success rate for recruits who failed to qualify on initial qualification. Out of 18 recruits who were in RMP, 17 qualified.

“I realized what I was doing wrong, so I was able to correct it,” said Recruit Lindsey M. Jones, Platoon 4038, Papa Co., 4th RTBn., who said her biggest prob-

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- Sgt. Dale Wills, Primary Marksmanship Instructor

lem was getting comfortable in the shooting positions.

Jones shot a score of 110 on the day of initial qualification – 80 points short of qualifying – but quickly earned Sharpshooter during her time in RMP.

“The program did exactly what it was designed to do – there has been a decrease in ELS’s,” said Gunnery Sgt. Charles Smith, chief instructor for Marksmanship Training Unit, who revealed that the biggest challenge PMIs face

during RMP is motivating unqualified recruits.

Although the program has proven to be successful through its first and only platoon of female recruits, Wills has a different perspective on the importance of qualifying the first time.

“It is successful, but when you look at marksmanship you need to apply it to Initial Qualification because you’re not going to get a second chance in combat,” he said. “These are the building blocks for phase three marksmanship, which is what Marines do everyday in Iraq and Afghanistan, and they don’t get second chances.”

NHB renovation project begins

PATRICIA BINNS
NHB PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

The first phase of Naval Hospital Beaufort’s extensive renovation project has begun. This week, the Education and Training Department vacated its spaces on the third floor and relocated across the street to the Heritage Center. In addition to providing on-going educational offerings for hospital personnel, and a resource library, the department is also the site for college courses conducted by Park and Webster Universities.

“We expect to be fully functional by mid-December,” said Lt. Cmdr. Mark Sullivan, Department Head for Education and Training.

This move is the first in a series of moves that will take place over the next several months, as the hospital

goes forward with its much-anticipated “facelift.” One of the focal points of the project is the reconstruction of the two Medical-Surgical in-patient care areas: Ward M-5 on the fifth floor and Ward M-3 on the third floor.

In order to prepare for construction to improve these two sites, some departments and/or clinics will be temporarily relocated to other spaces within the hospital. Future articles will discuss upcoming moves and any impact there may be on the provision of health-care services.

As you visit the hospital in the upcoming months, you will see signs and posters indicating the progress of the renovation and a timeline for completion. Please be assured that all necessary precautions will be taken to provide safe environments for workers, beneficiaries, and staff.

Flu Shots

Who: Free for all military personnel and civilians who work on Parris Island

When: Now - April

Where: Permanent Party Sick Call, Branch Medical Clinic

More Info: 228-4237

